

DRAFT

***Mississippi Republican Party Chairman Jim Herring
Asks Democrat Chairman to Apologize
to Medicaid Recipients***

August 26, 2004

(Jackson, Miss.) Mississippi Republican Party Chairman Jim Herring called on Mississippi Democratic Party Chairman Wayne Dowdy to apologize to Mississippi's 65,000 Medicaid recipients being transitioned to Medicare for attempting to exploit them for political gain.

On Wednesday, Dowdy sent an e-mail to supporters across the state describing how Democrats can use Mississippi's Medicaid recipients for their political advantage. Dowdy explains that if their plan works "Mississippi Democrats will receive a lot of the credit." Dowdy announces a plan in the e-mail of running \$20,000 worth of television ads featuring an "amusing photograph" of Governor Barbour and President Bush talking to each other.

Due to the unsustainable doubling in size of the Mississippi Medicaid program during the previous administration, an equal number of Republicans and Democrats in the Legislature, with the support of Governor Barbour, passed the Medicaid Reform Act last session.

Chairman Herring explained that this e-mail is even more proof that Dowdy and the Democratic Party are only interested in using Mississippi's Medicaid crisis for politics. "While Governor Barbour has been enrolling these Medicaid beneficiaries in alternative prescription drug coverage and working for a federal waiver on their behalf, the Democrats

are plotting ways to exploit them for their own political gain," said Herring.

Herring said that instead of raising \$20,000 for political TV ads, the Democrats should use that money to buy ads which assist recipients in enrolling in alternative coverage. "Four years of Ronnie Musgrove caused this Medicaid crisis. It would seem they would want to be part of the solution and not part of the problem again," he said.

Herring added that there is no mention in Dowdy's e-mail regarding a Democrat plan to find the dollars needed to fix the Medicaid crisis; how to help these recipients enroll in other coverage; or how to remove those who are not eligible for Medicaid from the Medicaid rolls. "Governor Barbour is tackling these tough issues head on so Medicaid can be fixed and remain a viable option for our state's neediest citizens.

"This e-mail could have just as easily been written by John Kerry - no plan, no solution, no vision...just politics," said Herring.

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